Hijabi Muslim Women Representation in COHA between 1820 and 2019: A Diachronic Corpus-Based Study

Samar Sallam
Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Arts, Cairo University, Giza, Egypt,
samar.sallam1@yahoo.com

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Samar Ezzat Sallam
PhD candidate, Cairo University

Abstract

This is a diachronic corpus-based study that aimed to explore how hijabi Muslim women were represented in the Corpus of Historical American English (COHA) between 1820 and 2019. The study used corpus linguistics in conjunction with critical discourse analysis, particularly van Dijk's (2000) theoretical framework that analyzes the relation between discourse and ideology. The loan word *hijab* used in American texts was examined diachronically to find out whether there was bias against the religion of Islam in the use of language. Therefore, the frequency of the word, its contexts, prosodies and senses were explored. The study found out that *hijab* experienced semantic change, namely specialization, giving the meaning of *a head scarf*. The frequency of *hijab* increased over the period the corpus spans. Different genres featured the word *hijab* with negative, neutral and positive prosodies, but positive representation of hijabi women gradually grew towards the end of the time period. The study concluded that the negative representation of Muslim women wearing hijab indicated prejudice in language use as a result of the political atmosphere following 9/11 attacks, and the positive prosodies boosted with the passage of time in the corpus reflected the opposition of social actors to discriminatory acts.

Keywords: **hijab, Muslim women representation, prosody, ideology, COHA**

المستخلص

اعتمدت هذه الدراسة على مخزون من النصوص الرقمية للبحث فى كيفية تغير اللغة على مدار التاريخ. هدف هذا البحث إلى معرفة كيف تم تمثيل المرأة المحجبة فى مخزون نصوص تاريخية أمريكية (COHA) من عام 1820 حتى 2019. تم تحليل كلمة حجاب تاريخيا لفحص ما إذا كان هناك انحياز ضد الإسلام فى الإستخدام اللغوى. واستخدمت الدراسة المخزون اللغوى مع تحليل الخطاب النقدى، وتحديدا الإطار النظرى الذى اقترحه van Dijk (2000) لتحليل العلاقة بين الخطاب والأيديولوجى. تم دراسة عدد مرات استخدام الكلمة وسياقها ومدلولها ومعناها. وجدت الدراسة أن كلمة حجاب قد تعرضت إلى تغيردلالى، وبالتحديد التخصيص والذى استقر على معنى غطاء الرأس. زاد عدد مرات استخدام كلمة حجاب على مدى الفترة التى يغطيها مخزون النصوص التاريخية الأمريكية. ووجدت الكلمة فى أنواع مختلفة من النصوص بمدلولات سلبية ومحايدة وإيجابية. ولوحظ زيادة متدرجة فى تمثيل المرأة بصورة إيجابية حتى نهاية الفترة. خلصت الدراسة إلى أنه دل تمثيل المرأة المحجبة بصورة سلبية على الانحياز ضد الإسلام فى الإستخدام اللغوى نتيجة للمناخ السياسى عقب أحداث 9/11، وعكست الصورة الإيجابية التى تم تعزيزها بمرور الوقت فى مخزون النصوص الأمريكية معارضة أصحاب الأدوار الفاعلة فى المجتمع للممارسات التمييزية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: حجاب، صورة المرأة المسلمة، دلالة الإقتران، أيديلوجى، مخزون نصوص تاريخية أمريكية

Introduction

Within the broad context of 'Islamophobia', generally known as hatred of Islam, conflicting attitudes were developed towards Muslims. In particular, veiled Muslim women at some points in history considerably caught the world's attention, with some people discriminating against them and others showing empathy. For instance, on March 2004, France passed a law banning wearing conspicuous religious symbols in public schools (Al-Saji, 2010, p. 876). It was commonly known at that time that "[i]n some version of this narrative, the ban specifically targeted Muslim school girls wearing headscarves or hijab" (Baker, 2006, p. 22). On the other hand, New Zealand's Prime Minister, news anchors and television presenters and other New Zealand women appeared wearing the hijab as a sign of showing solidarity with the Muslim community in New Zealand; this occurred after the Christchurch mosque shootings that took place on March 2019 by an extremist who *livestreamed his atrocity on Facebook* (Ibrahim, 2019, pp. 3-4).

Political issues like these and conflicts over Islamic head and face coverings were recorded in English texts borrowing the word *hijab*. Borrowing is realized when a source-language word is

transferred directly to the target language (Vinay & Darbelnet, 2000, p. 85); these borrowed words are called loan words (Trask, 2015, p. 17). Although the English language already has words with similar meanings, such as *headscarf* and *veil*, English still borrowed *hijab*. It would thus be of interest to explore whether borrowing the word *hijab* in the English language displayed a negative prosody and placed *hijab* in negative contexts where veiled Muslims were discriminated against, thus probably indicating bias against Islam in language use. In this regard, Partington (2004) maintains that semantic prosody is "reserved for instances where an item shows a preference to co-occur with items that can be described as bad, unfavourable or unpleasant, or as good, favourable or pleasant" (p. 149). Sinclair (1996) also notes that positive prosodies communicate the speaker's approval and positive evaluation of a topic, whereas negative prosodies convey the speaker's disapproval and negative evaluation of a subject matter (p. 87, as cited in Partington, 2004, p. 150).

On this basis, this paper attempts to examine how hijab-wearing Muslims were represented in the Corpus of Historical American English (COHA) between 1820 and 2019. It particularly focuses on the frequency and context of *hijab*, tracing when it was first used in the English language and its pattern of use over time. Also, finding out whether *hijab* underwent any form of semantic change is explored in the study. In this regard, Trask (2015) mentions that types of semantic change include "**generalization** (or **broadening**) and **specialization** (or **narrowing**)" (p. 36; emphasis in original). For Trask (2015), "specialization appears to be far more frequent than generalization" (p. 37). This is the case in the Egyptian dialect with the Arabic word حجاب (*hijab*), where it is commonly used to refer to *headscarf*. According to Almarwaey and Ahmad (2021), it might be the specialized "use of Islamic terms in Arabic and among Muslim communities on global and national levels" that resulted in the narrowing of borrowed Islamic words (p. 174). However, this is beyond the scope of the study and requires an analysis of the semantic change of the Arabic word حجاب over the same period the corpus spans to ascertain or refute this proposal. The current study attempts to discover whether *hijab* in the American context was first used as a generic term for all kinds of Islamic coverings, such as face veil, chador, head covering and the like before it was used as a specific

term referring to a specific article of clothes, such as *headscarf*, or the reverse was true.

The problem the study seeks to investigate is whether bias exists against Islam in language use during the period the corpus spans. In an attempt to find an answer to the research problem, the study investigates both positive and negative prosodies of *hijab*. The rationale behind choosing this term is that *hijab* is a loan word borrowed from Arabic, and is thus believed to carry with it its cultural and Islamic connotations. If the analysis shows that *hijab* is referred to in positive contexts, this can show that a favorable narrative is created about Muslim women. Association of the term with negative sentiments, however, is seen as problematic because typically public opinions are influenced by how narratives are constructed around certain groups of people. If COHA is found to have numerous texts discriminating against hijabi Muslim women, it may be an indication that bias exists in various genres to which people from different backgrounds are exposed. As a result, distorted images of Muslim women can be imprinted on the minds of the audience.

The study therefore seeks to answer one main question: What does the context of *hijab* suggest about bias against Islam in language use across COHA between 1820 and 2019? To find an answer to this question, the paper aims to answer the following sub-questions: a) What kind of semantic change (generalization or specialization) does *hijab* undergo? b) How does the frequency of *hijab* change over the time period? d) In which genres does *hijab* appear? e) What prosodies are associated with *hijab* across the period the corpus spans? f) How does the construction of hijabi Muslims differ from one year to another in COHA?

In order to answer these questions, and achieve the purpose of the study, the techniques and tools of corpus linguistics (CL) are applied. Concordance lines and frequencies in COHA are analyzed. The Online Etymology Dictionary that provides explanations of what words meant so many years ago is also used to pinpoint the earliest year during which the word *hijab* appeared in a written record in English. COHA in particular is used because it is the largest corpus of historical English, containing more than 475 million words of authentic texts produced by American native speakers. It is divided into decades, from 1820s to 2010s (see https://www.english-corpora.org/coha/). This corpus with its features, thus, can serve to

trace the emergence of *hijab*, showing its pattern of use and development over time.

Another reason why COHA is selected is that it covers significant years that featured hijab representation. COHA includes the years before and after the passage of the French law that prohibited wearing religious symbols (2004) and the French law that banned wearing face veils in public (2010) (McCrea, 2013, p. 54). COHA also covers 2019, the year when New Zealand shootings occurred, which were followed by some influential women wearing the hijab to show the world their solidarity with Muslim women. In addition, since 9/11 attacks were seen by several scholars as a turning point causing hateful attitudes towards Muslims, particularly in the United States (Terman, 2017, p. 500), examining whether antagonistic practices against veiled Muslim women were developed as a consequence in and after 2001 would be of relevance. Furthermore, given that COHA has texts from different genres, not mainly news stories, it would be interesting to see whether such incidents and others that took place any time between 1820 and 2019 had their impact on the way *hijab* was discussed in these genres.

Literature Review

Tracing the representation of veiled Muslim women over a period of almost 200 years is an area that requires an awareness of other related studies that addressed issues relevant to Muslim women portrayal in different corpora. While no study, to the best of my knowledge, has examined how hijabi women were depicted in COHA, the studies reviewed below can uncover the mainstream ideology and the prevailing attitude towards Muslim women.

Yet, prior to delving deeper into these studies, some knowledge of the first point at which the word *hijab* was recorded needs to be attained. According to the Online Etymology Dictionary, by 1906 bilingual dictionaries had used the word *hijab* to refer to "veil worn by some Muslim women". In COHA, in 1954 *hijab* appeared in a text where the sense of *hijab* was unclear: "people have recommended C everett all my pillow over to get baby hijab I but why I tag got a docudrama bought I'm you don't like are not too bad going to be ready to go is dotted with palm and 2 I'm tried to turn back I saved alright yeah looked do County". In the 20th century, in 1992 in particular, *hijab* was used for the first time in the sense of *headscarf*: "2007, after Aqsa Parvez was murdered by her father in Toronto for

not wearing hijab (a head covering)". It is also noticed that the word *hijabi* was first used in COHA in 2010; it appeared only four times in the sense of *veiled*: "I am a hijab-wearing Muslim woman -- -- I was the only hijabi in the west wing".

The development of the use of the term *hijab* is tracked in COHA utilizing the tools of corpus linguistics. This is a research instrument that involves collecting texts in an electronic form to create a corpus. The texts can be investigated with the aid of corpus-processing software that allows a comparison of contexts. One example pertinent to the current study is the evaluation theme realized by expressing an opinion or advocating a stance; this is associated with the application of qualitative approaches to the corpus (O'Keeffe, 2011, p. 75). In fact, "a corpus can give very useful information, allowing intuitions about the evaluative force of particular lexical items to be investigated" (**Hunston & Thompson, 2000,** p. 18). By way of further illustration, corpus tools disclose "much about the lexical environment, especially the semantic prosody of the high-frequency key words" (O'Keeffe, 2011, p. 75). Semantic prosody means "that a given word or phrase may occur most frequently in the context of other words or phrases which are predominantly positive or negative in their evaluative orientation" (Channell, 2000, p. 38). This notion is adopted in the present research in the diachronic analysis of the different attitudes to and feelings about hijabi women as addressed in COHA. This corpus, used to diachronically examine variation across text-types, "is balanced by genre decade by decade" from 1820s to 2010s. These genres are "fiction, magazine, newspaper, other non-fiction" (see https://www.english-corpora.org/coha/). The viewpoints expressed in these genres are analyzed by applying corpus linguistics in tandem with critical discourse analysis (CDA) to examine discourses of veiled Muslim women.

One study that combined critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics is Al-Hejin's (2015) that investigated the discursive strategies used in the representation of hijab-wearing women in BBC News stories. A total of 3269 articles were collected between 2001 and 2007 from BBC News website. The analysis of the referential strategies uncovered that BBC did not specify the kinds of hijab they referred to (p. 31). The most frequent predicational strategy was the negative predication that Muslim women were victims of hijab enforcement. Instances in the corpus where hijab was worn on the

basis of free-will decisions were significantly less frequent. Another negative predication was that hijab was unwelcome in some contexts, such as Turkish universities and French public schools. Hyperbolic predications were detected in concordances with sentences such as, "old people were afraid and children cried when women started appearing in long black robes with their faces covered" (p.34). Objectivation was realized with phrases, such as 'silent shadows' and 'ghostly figures'; such portrayals were mainly about women wearing face veils. The hijab was depicted as a barrier to professional development, while face veils were seen as a cultural practice that impedes communication and integration in Western societies. Few concordances with admissions of discrimination against Muslim women wearing the hijab, and calls from some Muslims and non-Muslims to defend their rights, were reported. Yet, examples of non-Muslims having no reservations about the hijab were infrequent. The study also found that the hijab was mentioned in contexts where it was irrelevant. In this regard, the researcher pointed out that van Leeuwen (1996) postulates that physical attributes serve to categorize social actors. Thus, it was concluded that this was meant to classify women.

Different from the above study is Robati's (2016) that focused, not on news stories, but on the Qur'anic text. Robati explored the translation strategies used for rendering the word *jilbab* (a loose, long garment worn by some Muslim women). The study examined 64 English and Persian translations of verse 59 of sura Al-Ahzab. Davies' model (2003), designed mainly for translating culture-bound terms, was adopted as the theoretical framework. The study found the following results: it was shown that between the fourth and the thirteenth centuries, both Persian and English translators relied on only one term: *cloak* in English and *chador* in Persian. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, other translations of *jilbab* appeared, which the researcher interpreted as an indication of the rise of Islamic cultural awareness that led to the freedom of the translators in terms of what to include in the target text.

This awareness of and knowledge about Islamic clothes did not always bring with it positive representations as Samaie and Malmir (2017) found out. Adopting both quantitative and qualitative analyses through the methodological synergy of Corpus Linguistics (CL) and Discourse Historical Approach (DHA), the researchers investigated USA media description of Islam and Muslims in a corpus

consisting of 1295 articles published between 2001 and 2015. The collocational and concordance analysis disclosed that Muslim women were labeled as suppressed and oppressed, confined by their hijabs and forced to wear them. Other negative portrayals of women included having limited rights, being helpless, abused, mistreated, attacked and victims of wars. One positive trait attributed to Muslim women was being supportive. With this in mind, the researchers concluded that the major representation of Muslim women was that of an oppressive view. This claim was supported by extracts from the corpus that the researchers quoted to show that women in Saudi Arabia "*are required to cover themselves from head to toe*, wearing the niqab, a veil that covers *even the face*, essentially *erasing a woman's identity* while she is in public" (p. 11, emphasis in original).

Similar results were revealed in Neelam's (2017) study which investigated U.S. newspaper articles in The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). The researcher sought to find out how Muslim women were represented between 2001 and 2012 in twenty-five American newspaper articles. Overall, the analysis of the concordances with the word *hijab* showed that it was associated with negative connotations, consistently represented as a symbol of suppression over the years. However, when a woman spoke positively about the United States, she was introduced as a hijabi "to give due weightage to her objective inclusion" (p. 30). The study concluded that the American press "constructs, deconstructs, reconstructs and manipulates the identities of Muslim women as per the requirements" (p. 30).

Bouferrouk and Dendane's study (2018) was focused on a different item of Islamic coverings, namely *burka/burqa* (a long loose garment that covers the whole body and the head), attempting to examine its representation in the UK media. Two data sets were collected from newspaper articles between 2010 and 2016, and were then quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed. The analysis revealed that negative representation was the most dominant theme. *Burka/burqa* was depicted as a primitive dress that suppressed women and threatened the identity of the West that expressed concerns about the growing number of women who brought their Islamic and cultural practices with them. The collocations *ban*, *banning, France* and *Britain* were interpreted as signifying the debate over the *burka/burqa* and the calls for banning it in some European countries. A few

concordances were neutral having definitions of what *burka /burqa* meant. Fewer concordances detected positive representations, with some women emphasizing their free-will decisions of wearing *burka/burqa*, and their capacity to fight stereotypical images. References to *hijab* over the period (2010-2016) were rare; the disparity in the frequency between *burka/burqa* and *hijab* was explained as an indication that *hijab* was not as controversial as *burka/burqa* during that time.

Ibrahim (2019), on the other hand, studied memes and GIFs to find out how hijabi Muslim women were depicted in the modern social media communication tools. The researcher examined 200 online memes and 200 GIFs posted on March 2019. This timeframe was chosen in particular so as to explore the immediate effect of the Christchurch mosque terrorist attacks in New Zealand. The framing theory and the stereotyping concept were the theoretical framework adopted. The study employed a quantitative content analysis of both textual and visual elements in memes and GIFs. The study found more memes and GIFs that supported wearing the hijab than those against it. The vast majority of GIFs and around half the memes were pro-hijab. These tool of online communication mostly framed *hijab* and veiled Muslim women positively, depicting them as happy, respected, strong and independent; they were shown smiling, wearing stylish colorful hijabs and engaging in different sports and art activities.

In a similar fashion, El-Banna (2020) was concerned with whether there were major differences in the representation of veiled women and non-veiled women between 2018 and 2019 on Instagram. The study analyzed a corpus of 200 Instagram posts, concluding that there were not significant differences between how veiled and non-veiled women were depicted in Instagram posts of Egyptian and Western brand advertisements.

Research Gap

Following the findings of Al-Hejin's study (2015) that uncovered that BBC did not specify the kind of hijab addressed, the present study aims to discover which items of Islamic coverings were referred to in COHA, and whether tracing references over the years could indicate a semantic change of *hijab*. Based on the study Robati (2016) conducted, the current study attempts to examine the frequency of using the loan word, *hijab*, in English in COHA, thus finding out whether the borrowing of the term rose or fell over the years, which

could be an indication of the rise or fall of the awareness of Islamic-related issues as Robati suggested. Whereas the results of Neelam's study (2017) indicated that the word *hijab* was consistently associated with negative prosodies, the current study investigates whether this was true in COHA. Since Samaie and Malmir (2017) and Al-Hejin (2015) agreed that veiled women were negatively represented, the present study explores this notion to confirm it or reject it. Given that Bouferrouk and Dendane (2018) concluded that between 2010 and 2016 *hijab* was not very controversial based on its rare occurrences in British newspapers, the current study examines whether that was the case in American texts over the same period. The current study attempts to find out whether hijabi women were engaged in different sports and activities, like the veiled women depicted in online memes and GIFs, as the findings of Ibrahim's study (2019) revealed, or such results would be limited to modern social media tools of communication. Based on the conclusions El-Banna (2020) drew, the present study examines whether veiled women were compared with unveiled women in order to highlight the negative score of hijab-wearing women, or the current study yields similar results and finds that there were no differences. According to the review of the literature, it can be concluded that that there is a lack of diachronic studies that traced the use of the word *hijab*, and explored the change in the representation of hijab-wearing women from 1820 to 2019 in COHA. This is thus what the present study aims to investigate by integrating corpus linguistics with critical discourse analysis.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopts and adapts van Dijk's (2000) theoretical framework that analyzes the relation between discourse and ideology. In his book, *Ideology and discourse: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*, van Dijk (2000) proposes moves and strategies to reveal the underlying ideological stances and attitudes as manifested in racist and anti-racist discourses about immigrants (pp. 61-85). The present study limits itself to the strategies that can be best adapted and suited to discourses about Muslim hijabi women as demonstrated in what follows:

Authority: To support one's case, authority figures and organizations are mentioned in the discourse.

Actor description: Depiction of social actors can be done by references to their names, attributes, actions, roles, relations to others, and so on.

Burden: The main argument is that of a financial burden.

Categorization/Polarization: Actors are distinguished and categorically divided by attributing positive or negative traits to them.

Comparison: Comparative moves are meant to favor one group over another.

Consensus: Nationalist ideologies, which prioritize the unity and interests of a country over internal and political conflicts, blend with racist ideologies.

Distancing: This strategy is expressed by implying distance between a group of social actors and another.

Dramatization: This is realized by exaggerating the facts to one's advantage.

Empathy: This accords empathy to the group depicted as victims, and shows sympathy for them.

Evidentiality: Evidentials offer proof for the information presented in the discourse, making the argument plausible and credible.

Example/illustration: Giving examples illustrate points made in the discourse.

Generalization: This move makes claims broader, typical and representative for effective policies to be enforced.

Humanitarianism: This is manifested in defense of human rights and critique of violations of these rights.

Legality: Resorting to the law is done to advocate a point of view in the discourse.

Lexicalization: Selective choice of lexical terms uncovers underlying beliefs and ideologies.

Metaphor: Metaphors are used to symbolize given meanings or refer to social actors. In racist discourse, most metaphors are derogatory, and fall under the overall approach of negative other-presentation.

National Self-glorification: As part of the strategy of positive self-presentation, positive references to one's nation are made.

Negative Other-presentation: Social actors described as the others are expressed in derogatory terms.

Norm Expression: This move is applied by norm statements about what should or should not be done.

Positive Self-presentation: Social actors emphasize the positive qualities of their own group.

Populism: This involves a claim that all people believe a certain way or undergo a given experience.

Presupposition: Social actors communicate controversial beliefs based on assumptions.

Repetition: This move is used to emphasize given ideas.

Situation Description: This strategy is applied to describe actions and experiences.

Vagueness: Vague expressions convey situations in a fuzzy manner.

Victimization: Social actors are represented as victims of other social actors.

Analysis and Discussion
The Change in the Frequency of *Hijab* over the Time Period

In COHA, *hijab* occurred 52 times, eleven of which were not used in the sense the study aims to discover. In these eleven concordance lines, *Hijab* was used as a proper noun, and the concordances having this name were therefore excluded: "Syrian Prime Minister Riyad Hijab has defected to the opposition". Hijab used to refer to Islamic clothes occurred 41 times. Overall, the frequency of *hijab* rose gradually over time. As the table below illustrates, in 1950s, *hijab* occurred only one time. In 1990s, it was used two times. In 2000s, the corpus recorded five hits. In the last decade, in 2010s, figures for *hijab* hiked to 33 times. This increase in the frequency of the loan word can be attributed to the terrorist

attacks of 2001, which drew the world's attention to Muslims and their practices.

Table 1

The Shift in the Frequency of Hijab Since its Appearance in COHA

Decades	1950s	1990s	2000s	2010s
Frequency	1	2	5	33

The Semantic Change the Word *Hijab* Underwent and the Prosody Associated with it

Hijab was first used in the *Astronomy Magazine* in the corpus in the specialized sense of *head covering*, as the example from 1992 illustrated: "after Aqsa Parvez was murdered by her father in Toronto for not wearing hijab (a head covering)". Placing *a head covering* between parentheses indicates that the term *hijab* was not very familiar to the readers at the time of the publication of the magazine. In this article, a father killed his daughter for not wearing hijab, demonstrating how Muslim women could be victims of extremism and fanaticism. The sentence syntax had ideological implications too, where the use of the passive structure intensified the sense of victimization of the passivated social actor**, the murdered girl**. These findings are similar to what Al-Hejin (2015) mentioned about Muslim women being victims of hijab enforcement. Regarding the level of actor description and degree of details, the article author went down to specifics from nomination, relational identification to spatialization. There was a reference to the city where the crime took place. The writer nominated the victim semi-formally by a proper noun (first name and surname) to make her an identifiable individual for the reader. There was also a relational identification, where the girl was represented in terms of her kinship relation to the murderer, her father. This presented the killing as atrocious, leaving the audience in shock for how a father could murder his daughter. Moreover, the lexicalization of the concept of *killing* through the verb *murdered* depicted this act in an outrageous manner. **For Hunston and**

Thompson (2000), two words could communicate "the same information, but suggest a different attitude towards it . . . *execution*, *assassination*, *killing*, *murder*, and *slaughter* may all be used to describe the same incident, but the sense of moral outrage increases with each successive noun" (pp. 17-18). This suggests that *murdered* has a more violent connotation than *killed*, and thus victimizes the social actor even more.

After three years in the same corpus, particularly in 1995 in *The Time Magazine*, *hijab* was used as a generic term (Islamic clothes) that included more specialized senses, such as *headdress* and *chador*: "[b]y their way of dress, Iranians signal where they stand in the cultural divide. Devout revolutionaries wear dark colors. Men favor baggy trousers, long-sleeved shirts buttoned to the neck and several days' growth of beard; women wear layers of Islamic clothes known as hijab, including the magneh (a headdress) and the chador. On the other side, the garbzadeh -- literally, "those poisoned by the West" -- wear jeans". Here, comparison, categorization and polarization are three main strategies that mark ideology in this discourse. Different groups of people were compared to each other, categorized and so polarized into clearly separate groups with opposite appearances and manners; veiled Muslim women were positively represented as devout as opposed to "those poisoned by the West" who "wear jeans". As Al-Hejin (2015) found, *hijab* was used to classify and categorize people. Lexicalization explicitly expressed the criterion for the categorization, manifested by the lexical choices of "[b]y their way of dress" and "the cultural divide" in "[b]y their way of dress, Iranians signal where they stand in the cultural divide".

After eight years, in 2003 in the Television/Movie genre, the sense of *hijab* broadened even further to cover *face veil*: "I could go in. See if he's inside. I'll wear a hijab, hide my face. He wouldn't see me". The same meaning was used in the same year in the News genre: "who wants that Ninja turtle look?" She said, referring to the hijab, or black cloak that covers all but a woman's eyes". Unlike the first example where the context was neutral, the second one had *hijab* associated with a negative prosody, where the appearance of a hijab-wearing woman was likened to a Ninja turtle. This metaphor is an explicit form of derogation that falls under the ideologically based strategy of negative other-presentation, symbolizing the ugliness of the look of hijab in the eyes of the speaker. This negative metaphor is

similar to the metaphors found by Al-Hejin's (2015) study, where women were depicted as 'silent shadows' and 'ghostly figures. Likewise, Bouferrouk and Dendane's study (2018) showed that *Burka/burqa* between 2010 and 2016 was portrayed as a primitive dress. These descriptions are different from what was revealed in Ibrahim's study (2019) that found that veiled Muslim women were represented positively as wearing stylish colorful hijabs. The contrast between these results is possibly because Ibrahim studied online memes and GIFs in 2019, but the current findings arise from a 2003 article.

In 2004 in the News genre, the sense of *hijab* narrowed back to *headscarf* and was placed in a negative context. A woman was exposed to severe maltreatment for her choice to wear a veil: "Raghada's mother forced to take off her head scarf. 'My mother wears a hijab, and my uncle told us they were dragging her by her hair,' says Raghada". Vagueness is characteristic of this text. This strategy was realized by passive agent deletion in "Raghada's mother forced to take off her head scarf", and by the use of a vague pronoun, *they*, which did not have a well-defined referent, leaving social actors anonymized and unspecified in "my uncle told us they were dragging her by her hair". This "exophoric reference . . . endows social actors with a kind of impersonal authority, a sense of unseen, yet powerfully felt coercive force" (van Leeuwen, 1996, p. 52). The uncle's statement was hence established on the exclusion of the social actors who oppressed the hijabi woman, and is built on the denial of responsibility. The move of lexicalization, particularly the choice of *forced* and *dragging*, contributed to the victimization of Raghada's mother. Similar to the findings of Samaie and Malmir's study (2017) that covered the years from 2001 to 2015, the woman in the 2004 article was helpless, abused and attacked.

In 2006 in *The Times Magazine*, wearing hijab was viewed as a practice that might arouse controversy. Yet, compared to headdresses worn by some nuns, hijab was not as debatable: "[f]or the iPod generation, it doesn't get more radical than wearing a veil. The hijab worn by traditional Muslim women might have people talking, but it's the wimple that really turns heads. And in the U.S. today, the nuns most likely to wear that headdress are the ones young enough to have a playlist". This comparative move suggests the extreme score of the iPod generation and the nuns more than Muslim

women wearing hijab. The article in *The Times Magazine* did not specify the meaning of *hijab*, which is similar to one of the findings of Al-Hejin's study (2015) that showed that BBC between 2001 and 2007 did not define *hijab* in all concordances.

In 2009 in the Fiction genre, *hijab* was used in reference to *head scarf*. An extract from an article stated: "[a] breeze came skittering down the street, flapping her dress about her legs, and she reached up with a hand to readjust her head scarf. The pins kept it attached to her hair, so her black locks couldn't peek out, but as always, wearing the hijab and the long modest dress somehow made Leila more aware of her body". In this example, *hijab* was used alternatively with *head scarf* as this quotation shows that hijab is one thing and the long dress is another, not included in the sense of *hijab*. The frequent references to the woman's body parts (her legs, a hand, her hair, her black locks) objectified the woman a little. For van Leeuwen (1996), possessivated somatization, realized by references to body parts premodified by possessive pronouns, is a form of semi-objectivation, where the person is not involved, but their body is (p. 60). This focuses the readers' attention more on the woman's body than on the woman herself as much as the woman is "aware of her body" owing to the Islamic clothes she was wearing. Generalization strategy applied by the use of *always* made this claim of body awareness typical and stereotypical. With respect to this point, Bouferrouk and Dendane's study (2018) found that there were few instances where Muslim women between 2010 and 2016 emphasized their ability to remove stereotypical images.

All concordances in 2010 came from one text titled, "Lift the Veil, See the Light", a Nonfictional/Academic genre. In the article, *hijab* was defined in the specialized sense of *headscarf*: "the hijab (traditional headscarf)" that did not hide a woman's identity: "[b]ecause the hijab and the chador don't obscure one's identity, Muslim women living in secular democracies in the West have the right to wear them in public". The mention of "secular democracies in the West" in connection with "the right" was done based on the underlying ideology of positive self-presentation. This move can "be implemented by various forms of national self-glorification: Positive references to or praise for the own country, its principles, history and traditions" (van Dijk, 2000, p. 78).

In this text, the strategies of humanitarianism, empathy and victimization were adopted: "[w]omen all over the world are fighting desperately to be free from having to cover themselves. They are harassed, ostracized, disowned, beaten, raped, and murdered for refusing to wear body and face obscuring garments. Every day women call NPNS and complain about being forced into a hijab, chador, niqab, or burqa by their families and communities. They're afraid for their safety, their wellbeing -- for their lives. They feel they have no choice". This alleged endorsement of humanitarian values and defense of women rights to freedom and dignity depicted Islamic clothes as "tools of misogyny and oppression" enforced upon victimized, maltreated Muslim women, a presentation calling for empathy and sympathy for their case. This in turn laid the foundation for taking measures so a Muslim woman could "lift the veil". With the adoption of the move of legality, the writer advocated recourse to law: "if the French anti-mask law passes, they -- and more importantly their oppressors -- will be left with no choice but to lift the veil and to see what true liberty looks like". The use of the first conditional served to express future consequences of policies when formulated to ban wearing 'masks' in public, and thus that law could gain acceptance. Through lexicalization strategy, the article author opted for "anti-mask law" with the goal of emphasizing the perception of hijab as something that hides women's identities.

Seeking approval for this law, the victimization of veiled women was exaggerated. Applying the moves of dramatization, generalization and populism, the text delineated "women all over the world" as struggling "[e]very day" against the imposition of Islamic coverings and against being "harassed, ostracized, disowned, beaten, raped, and murdered". That was done to make the claim broader, generally applicable and thus effective laws must be passed. Even more, these clothes were described as symbols for sexuality and gender inequality: "there is no more universal symbol for gender discrimination, segregation, and inequality, for the oppression of women and the demonization of female sexuality than the hijab, the chador, the niqab, and the burqa" and "[t]hey serve to mark a woman as a sexually available whore, a marriageable virgin, or the claimed sexual property of another Muslim". Although this discussion was mainly made in the context of the French ban on face veil in 2010, *hijab* (headscarf) was repeatedly mentioned negatively along with

other types of Islamic clothes. It may thus be suggested that Bouferrouk and Dendane's conclusion (2018) that between 2010 and 2016 the issue of hijab was not controversial is questionable. Similar to the current example, negative representations were found in Al-Hejin's study (2015), Neelam's study (2017) and Samaie and Malmir's study (2017).

In 2012 in *Parenting Early Years Magazine*, *hijab* was used in a context in the narrow sense of *head scarf*. One article advised that "[i]f your child asks a question you can't answer, like "Why is that lady wearing a head scarf?" (a Muslim hijab), it's perfectly OK to admit you don't know the answer and suggest that you learn more about the custom together". Here, even though the context was neutral, *hijab* was portrayed, by the strategies of example/illustration and distancing, as an alien practice for which a parent may not be able to account for to his child. The choice of this example in particular to educate parents on how to address their children's questions implies distance between Muslims and people of other religions and cultures.

In 2013 in the Fiction genre, the meaning of *hijab* was not explained. One article narrated the following: "he'd already washed her blood from his hands, injected her baby with the contents of the syringe and chosen, from among her clothes, the hijab and abaya that were to become his shroud". Here, *hijab* collocated with *abaya* (a loose robe). Considering that in the Arab culture, some women usually wear abaya and hijab together, and usually use the collocation عباءة وطرحة (abaya and headscarf), *hijab* in that context probably referred to the narrow sense of *head covering*. Yet, it may be difficult to confirm this interpretation because one may wonder how the murdered would use a headscarf as a shroud. While the move of situation description did not result in associating *hijab* with neither positive nor negative prosody, the way the story unfolded raises questions about the specific selection of the hijab and abaya from among the murdered woman's clothes.

In 2014 in the News genre, *hijab* was used to express the meaning of *headscarf*, and used in a context that showed that those wearing hijab and niqab were excluded. In an article, an account of an event in the life of a Muslim woman was narrated as follows: "[s]he later became a certified nurse's aide. The young woman had aspirations of serving in the U.S. military, but when she converted to Islam, she believed fellow soldiers wouldn't accept a woman wearing

a hijab and niqab, according to federal court records". This shows how the U.S. military displayed exclusionary practices against hijabi women. This notion was supported by the strategy of evidentiality, where the addition of "according to federal court records" at the end of the sentence presented some evidence for the claim about the U.S. military prejudice against hijabi women, making it objective, reliable and therefore credible. The context gives minor evidence that it may have been the nurses' desire to wear the hijab as she sacrificed her dream of joining the U.S. military, and joined the U.S. Army Explorers instead because the U.S. military would not accept a veiled women: "[i]n September, she joined the U.S. Army Explorers to learn how to handle guns. She believed her destiny was to join a Muslim suitor she met online". This idea of hijab willingly worn by a Muslim girl is different from what Samaie and Malmir (2017) found in their study about hijab enforcement on Muslim women.

In the same year, in the Fiction genre, *hijab* was not given a specific definition. The context demonstrates that women wearing hijab were unwanted and discriminated against in the French society: "The French liked immigrants to integrate; they didn't care what color your skin was so long as you didn't wear the hijab in public". The writer's lexical choice of "[t]he French", via the two political-ideological moves, populism and consensus, combined nationalist ideologies with racist anti-hijab ones to fortify the argument that the whole nation rejected the hijab. This is in line with one of the findings of Al-Hejin's study (2015) that indicated that the hijab was unwelcome in French public schools and Turkish universities.

In 2015 in *USA Today Magazine*, *hijab* referred to *head scarf* and had a favorable prosody associated with a smiley girl. One article recounted a story through actor description move: "[a] young girl wearing a green hijab sat on my lap, her cheeky smile flashing whenever she turned her head". Here, the girl's smile was noticed, making clear that *hijab* did not mean *face veil*. Ibrahim's study (2019) showed similar results, where Muslim women were depicted as happy and smiling.

In 2017, eight concordance lines came from the Fiction genre. In an article titled "Eden", *hijab* meant *headdress*: "[h]er hair is fully concealed by the hijab". In this text, parents opposed their daughter for choosing to wear the hijab: "[w]e've paid nearly twelve years of tuition, for Chrissake. We've sacrificed holidays, renovations,

everything for you. You can't expect us to let you just throw it away.' #' I'm not throwing it away. I'm not dropping out.' # But he does not hear her.' This is just a phase. You've got everything, your whole future at your fingertips and you reckon Allah wants you to sit at home instead?' # She flinches at this.' It's a hijab, Dad, and I'm not dropping out. I'm staying at school, I'm going to university and I'm still going to study architecture". Through the strategies of burden and presupposition, the parents mentioned the financial burden they had to bear for the completion of their daughter's education, so she would be convinced and ultimately abandon hijab, which they presupposed would be an obstacle to education. Negative other-presentation is manifest in the way hijab symbolized backwardness in the mother's statement: "[s]urely women had come too far to now revert to this?". The hijabi girl, on the other hand, was represented as confident and capable of defending her freedom of choice, with the aid of lexicalization: "[s]he used language that had never been more than abstractions in our house: anti-discrimination, religious freedom, democracy". The personality of this girl was represented in a manner similar to how veiled women were portrayed in Ibrahim's study (2019); they were depicted as strong and independent. The hijab, on the other hand, was seen by the parents as an obstacle to success, similar to how some perceived the hijab in Al-Hejin's study (2015).

In the same year in *The Massachusetts Review* in the Fiction genre, the sense of *headdress* remained and was placed in a neutral context. One example was this: "I saw sweat had darkened the rim of her veil. Hijab, if I remembered the word . . . She used the corner of her veil to wipe her forehead". In this example, the Muslim women used the hijab to wipe her forehead, indicating that her face was not covered, and hence hijab did not mean *face veil*. Likewise, *hijab* did not refer to clothes covering the whole body either, otherwise the woman would not have been able to use the corner of the hijab to wipe her face. With the repetition move, the author used the word *veil* twice and mentioned *hijab* once, directing the readers' attention to Islamic clothes. Yet, the insertion of "Hijab, if I remembered the word" through the distancing move indicates that *hijab* was still unfamiliar to some people although the text was produced in 2017. This is in contradiction with Robati's study (2016) that suggested that in the fifteenth century Islamic cultural awareness rose considerably.

In *Huffington Post Magazine* in 2017, the article displayed objections to discriminations against hijabi women delineated as the other and as terrorists. One segment stated that "successfully Muslims have been designated the "other" in this country. # When a group is an "other," it's easier to attack them, or to strip them of their civil rights". Via the move of humanitarianism, the author mentioned the plight of deprivation of civil rights due to the categorization and polarization of Muslims into "the other". Overall, situation description, victimization and empathy were implemented to define the situation of Muslims in Islamophobic contexts so as to gain the empathy and sympathy of the audience: "Islamophobia isn't something that can ever be tracked comprehensively. There's too much of it … It's when a Muslim mom tells her daughter to maybe not wear the hijab today … It's how almost every Muslim in a movie is depicted as a terrorist". To clarify the consequences of Islamophobia, examples were given of mothers fearing for their hijabi daughters and of Muslims portrayed in movies as terrorists through the strategy of example/illustration. Populism and generalization moves were adopted in "[i]t's how almost every Muslim in a movie is depicted as a terrorist"; the choice of "almost every Muslim" generalized the negative presentation of Muslims. Generally, the article confirms Al-Hejin's statement (2015) about how some Muslims and non-Muslims disapproved discriminations against veiled women. In this magazine article, the meaning of *hijab* was not defined.

Similarly, in 2017 an article in the *Rolling Stone Magazine* did not determine the meaning of *hijab*, and the text again decried discriminatory behaviors towards veiled women. The following is an excerpt: "[n]or has Trump said or written anything about the brutal killing of a 17-year-old, abaya-wearing Muslim girl" and "after Joseph Christian stabbed two good samaritans to death and wounded a third -- people who were defending two young women, one wearing a hijab, while Christian shouted that "Muslims should die" -- it took Trump four days to tweet that the attack was "unacceptable". The mother complained: "I'm sure the guy hit my daughter because she's Muslim and she was wearing the hijab" and "I don't feel safe at all anymore, as a Muslim living here now. I'm so worried about sending my kids out and their coming back as bodies". Recourse to the authority move by the mention of the authority figure Trump, the president of the United States at the time the article was published, was meant to

support and prove the case the author made about deep-seated prejudice against Muslims. Quoting the criminal and the mother via the strategy of evidentiality, linked here to intertextuality, rendered the argument as objective, reliable and credible. This could provoke empathy for the fearful mother of the daughter attacked by the criminal who sought normalizing killing Muslims by shouting a strongly normative statement via norm expression: "Muslims should die". With a combination of actor description, empathy and victimization strategies, the writer conveyed "the brutal killing of a 17-year-old, abaya-wearing Muslim girl" to elicit sympathy for victimized young hijabi girls. More to the point, actor description was principally implemented to define actors in religious terms; the author initially nominated the criminal semi-formally by given name and surname (Joseph Christian) and once again formally by surname only (Christian) to emphasize his possible religious background, while portrayed the attacked girl, not by name, but by her Islamic clothes. This could appear as some form of Muslim-Christian polarization/categorization to serve the overall strategy of negative-other presentation through stressing the victimization of Muslims by Christians, and hence effective policies could be implemented.

In 2017, in the Nonfictional/Academic genre, _hijab_ was used in a positive context and meant _headscarf_. "Hijab challenge" was the theme of the text; women collaborated to wear the hijab in solidarity with Muslim women: "Sara Berzingi, president of the Muslim Students Association, suggested that people could participate later this week in her organization's "hijab challenge", during which people learn how to put on the traditional Muslim headscarf and can wear one all day in solidarity". With the authority move, the reference to the authority figure, president of the Muslim Students Association, gave weight to the initiative and aimed to validate wearing hijab in public. This is similar to what Ibrahim (2019) stated about how the Prime Minister of New Zealand, anchors, presenters and some New Zealand women wore the hijab to support Muslims in New Zealand after the Christchurch mosque shootings.

In 2018, the term _hijab_ underwent the semantic change of specialization. In the Fiction genre, _hijab_ was mentioned first, then _head scarf_ was used to refer back to it: "Rodrella walked down Twenty-Fourth, her hijab elegantly arranged and her loose clothes billowing and grazing the railing next to the Korean tapas place's

outdoor seating. All these bland and boring nondiverse, typical neighborhood heads turned. A head scarf in our neighborhood? Conversation lulled. Who is that? I was so proud of this confident strut she had". *Hijab* here was associated with a favorable prosody. Through actor description strategy the hijab and the hijabi woman were depicted in positive terms; the hijab was elegant, and the hijabi was confident.

What is surprising is that this woman's original look without the hijab in an interview was criticized. She was therefore encouraged by the neighborhood council chair, the one who interviewed and hired her, to wear the hijab for a more diverse look in the neighborhood: "as our neighborhood council chair, I even hired Rodrella in the first place. Not to say that she didn't look very pretty and smart in her interview clothes, very sharp features -- her hair pulled back and her glasses recently spritzed and microfiberly wiped. She looked basically like an associate at a law firm. I'm an associate at a law firm, and I can tell you that that's not what we need more of in our neighborhood, diversity-wise. That's why I suggested the hijab for day one". The mention of the neighborhood council chair by the strategy of authority aimed to establish the soundness and legitimacy of wearing the hijab in public places. A hijab-wearing woman became even more welcome in the professional context than a non-hijabi unlike how hijabis were not accepted in the academic field in French public schools and Turkish universities as mentioned earlier. Comparing these findings to El-Banna's study (2020) that showed that there were not major differences between the portrayal of veiled women and that of non-veiled women, shows that the two results are different.

In 2019 in the Television/Movie genre, an article indicated the obligation of wearing the hijab in Islam, but in strict and extreme terms: "[w]omen will no longer walk alone, without a family member escorting them. Women must wear the hijab at all times . . . Well… the hawks are demanding stricter Sharia law". Adding "at all times" via dramatization move gave a sense of exaggeration, where the hijab is not worn at home, for instance. The specific meaning of *hijab* was not clarified.

In the same year in the Fiction genre, *hijab* had a negative prosody through the use of a metaphor: "he and Sherri sat on the couch and flipped through horror movies from their youth. She had a theory that the villains of the genre signified global antagonists from

the era in question. Krueger = Khrushchev. Scream mask = xenophobic fear of the hijab". In line with one of the findings of Al-Hejin's study (2015), the hijab was associated with terror and antagonism. The metaphor of scream mask signified fear of hijab, and in Al-Hejin's study (2015) old people and children were reported as terrified of the look of veiled women who were depicted as ghostly figures and silent shadows. The reference of *hijab* to which item of Islamic clothes was not specified, but drawing an analogy between the hijab and the Scream mask could mean that hijab referred to face veil.

Three concordances in 2019 were extracted from *Raptors Magazine*, particularly from an article titled "Raptors Announce Branded Sports Hijabs as Part of Inclusivity Initiative". In this text the sense of *hijab* was defined, emphasizing the hijab theme, but suggesting that in 2019 hijab was still unfamiliar to some people: "The Toronto Raptors Nike Pro Hijab is available now . . . Hijabs are headscarves worn by some Muslim women that typically cover their head and chest but leave the face uncovered". The context was considerably pro-hijab, portraying athletic women wearing it while playing various sports: "'[h]ijab is not a preventative piece of cloth,' Shireen Ahmed, a member of the Hijabi Ballers advisory board, told Kwong and Fatima. 'Women play any sport you can imagine from basketball to surfing to table tennis to soccer to beach volleyball to para-bocce ball'". The text also confirmed the notion of free-will decisions via norm expression and humanitarian strategies, stating in an explicit norm-statement with "shouldn't" that "'[w]earing hijab is an extremely personal decision. And one that shouldn't affect an athlete's ability or right to partake in sport'". Via evidentiality, a reference was made to the press to communicate the reliability and credibility of Nike's inclusion of headdress-wearing women athletes, selling sportswear designed specifically for them: "# Speaking to the Canadian press (via the Associated Press), Ferguson said the Raptors were interested in 'finding ways to bring products and ideas to market 'to prove their dedication to being an inclusive organization that supports fans of all faiths. # Nike began selling athletic hijabs in 2017 with the goal of making sure athletes of all faiths were able to participate in sports using a specially designed piece of headwear that allowed them to perform'". Ibrahim's study (2019) found similar results in the same year, 2019, showing veiled women engaged in different sports and art activities.

In 2019 in the News genre, *hijab* was used as an item of clothes that a robber utilized to hide his identity. An extract from an article held: "Although the techniques used by the robber have remained roughly the same, according to the FBI's account, their description indicates that he has used a variety of disguises. # These have included a baseball cap, wig, gloves, hijab or hoodie". The citation from the FBI's account via evidentiality provided proof for the hijab having been used as one of the crime tools. While the context was negative associated with robbery, hijab, like the other items, was misused. Therefore, this example cannot be used to indicate a negative representation of hijab.

Conclusion

In order to explore how hijabi Muslim women were represented in American texts, the present study diachronically traced the pattern of use of the word *hijab*, the contexts it was placed in, and the prosodies associated with it from 1820 to 2019 in COHA. It was found out that *hijab* underwent the semantic change of specialization, which confirms Trask's (2015) contention that specialization is significantly more frequent than generalization. In 1992, *hijab* referred to *head scarf*; in 1995 and 2003, the meaning broadened to cover Islamic coverings, and then generally narrowed back down to *headdress* from 2004 until the end of the period, with a clear definition of *hijab* into *headscarf* in 2019.

The increase of the frequency of borrowing *hijab* in various genres in American texts suggested a growth in the awareness of some elements of the Islamic culture, the most relevant of which is *hijab* that was associated with positive, negative and neutral prosodies throughout the whole period. Yet, the rise in the positive representation of veiled women and anti-discriminatory texts near the end of the timeframe indicated that voices against bias started to be part of discourses about women wearing the hijab unlike the beginning of the period, where negative representation was the dominant theme. This showed how the political atmosphere had an impact on the perception of hijabi Muslim women; negative depictions followed 9/11 attacks, but when Muslims became victimized facing prejudice as a result, solidarity appeared in the scene.

Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations of the study is that it examined the word *hijab* only. For more reliable results, other words need to be analyzed, such as *chador*, *burqa*, *niqab*, *headscarf* and *veil*. Only examining *hijab* gives an incomplete picture and consequently ungeneralizable findings. The representations of other items of Islamic coverings need to be put together for an overall view of hijabi Muslim women representation in COHA. More can be studied for a comprehensive conclusion about bias against hijabi women in language use as the following suggests.

Suggestions for Future Research

1. A study diachronically investigating hijabi Muslim women representation over the same period (1820 - 2019) in Arabic texts, and comparing its findings to the representation in American texts in COHA.
2. A study diachronically analyzing the semantic change of the Arabic term حجاب between 1820 and 2019, and comparing its results to the semantic change of the loan word *hijab* over the same period in COHA.
3. A study diachronically comparing the representation of non-Muslim women to hijabi women representation over the same period in COHA.

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